H. Gordon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 ART Khasi ART

mould. The plant is watered by means of small bamboo aqueducts which are constructed along the hill-sides, the water being conducted along them often considerable distances. As in the plains, the leaves of the *pân* creeper are collected throughout the year.

The bay leaf (*la tyrpâd*, or *tarpât*) is classified in the *Agricultural Bulletin* as *Cinnamomum tamala*, and there is a note in the column of remarks that "this tree, as well as one or two others of the same genus, yields two distinct products, *tarpât* (bay leaf) and cinnamon bark." The bay leaf is gathered for export from the extensive gardens in Maharam, Malaisohmat, Mawsynram, and other Khasi States. The plants are raised from seed, although there are no regular nurseries, the young seedlings being transplanted from the jungle, where they have germinated, to regular gardens. Bay leaf gardens are cleared of jungle and weeds periodically; otherwise no care is taken of them. The leaf-gathering season is from November to March. The leaves are allowed to dry for a day or two in the sun, and then packed in large baskets for export. The gathering of bay leaf begins when the trees are about four years old.

The following are the other minor crops which are grown in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills:—

Pineapples, turmeric, ginger, pumpkins and gourds, the egg plant, chillies, sesamum, and a little sugar-cane. The arum* (*la shiriw*) is also extensively grown in the hills, and forms one of the principal articles of food amongst the poorer classes; it is generally raised in rotation with potatoes, or is planted along with Job's tears. The stem of the arum is sometimes used as a vegetable, also for feeding pigs.

In the Jowai Sub-Division, notably at Nartiang, there are fairly good mangoes, which are more free from worms than those grown in the plains of Assam.

The Bhois and Lyngams cultivate lac. They plant *arhar dal*, *u landoo*, in their fields, and rear the lac insect on this plant. Last year the price of lac at Gauhati and Palasbari markets rose as high as Rs. 50 per maund of 82 lbs., it is said, but the price at the outlying markets of Singra and Boko was

* Colocasia esculenta, Beng. Kachu.

I: Gordon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR? Khasi AR?

cartridge all the fish within a certain area are killed, some escape. When poisons are used, however, some fish are not affected by them, and others are only stupefied for the time being and afterwards recover.

FOOD.

The Khasi and Syntengs ordinarily take two meals a day, one in the early morning and the other in the evening, but labourers and others who have to work hard in the open take a midday meal as well, consisting of cold boiled rice wrapped in a leaf (*ka já-sang*), cakes (*ki kpoh*) and a tuberous root (*u sohphlang*) which is eaten raw. They are fond of all kinds of meat, especially pork and beef, although some of the Syntengs, owing to Hindu influence, abstain from eating the latter. Unlike the neighbouring Naga, Garo and Kuki tribes, the Khasis abstain from the flesh of the dog. *Both Rivers and Shadwell* say the reason why the Khasis do not eat the flesh of the dog is because he is in a certain sense a sacred animal amongst them. There is a Khasi folk-tale relating how the dog came to be regarded as the friend of man. It is, however, quite possible that the Khasis may never have eaten the flesh of the dog from remote times, and it is nothing extraordinary that the Khasis should differ in a detail of diet from the neighbouring Tibeto-Burman tribes which are so dissimilar to them in many respects. The Khasis, except some of the Christian community and some of the people of the Mawkhar, do not use milk, butter, or ghee as articles of food. In this respect they do not differ from the Kacharis and Rabhas of the plains or the Garos of the hills. The Mongolian race in its millions as a rule does not use milk [illegible] tribes are exceptions. Before fowls or animals are killed for food, prayers must be said, and rice sprinkled on the body of the animal. The staple food of the Khasis is rice and dried fish. When rice cannot be obtained or is scarce, millet or Job's tears are used instead. The latter are boiled, and a sort of porridge is obtained, which is eaten either hot or cold according to fancy. Khasis eat the flesh of nearly all wild animals, they

1:Gordon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR? Khasi AR?

262. also eat fruit rats and one kind of monkey (*u shrih*). The Syntengs and Lyngams are fond of tadpoles, and the Khasis consider a curry made from a kind of green frog, called *ka jaynih*, a luxury. They, however, do not eat ordinary frogs (*jakoid*). The Khasis of Mariaw, Maharam, Nongstoin and some other Siemships eat the hairy caterpillar, *u'hiang phlang*.

262. A staple food which must not be forgotten is the inner portion of the bark of the sago palm tree, *ka tiai*, which grows wild in the forest and attains a large size. The tree is felled and the outer bark removed, the soft inner part is cut into slices, dried in the sun, pounded in a mortar and then passed through a fine bamboo sieve. A reddish flour is obtained, of sweet taste, which is boiled with rice. This flour is said to make good cakes and puddings.

263. Although the Khasis are such varied feeders, there are some clans amongst them which are prohibited by the ordinance of *niang*, or taboo, from eating certain articles. The following are some instances :—

The Chawra Sims family cannot eat dried fish (*kha pinit*); the Sims of Mylliem must not eat the gourd (*u pathoe*); a fish called *ka'kha-lasi ki* taboo to some of the *Siem-lih* clans. Some of the War people must not eat *ka khang* (preserved fish), and the clan *Khar-um-wind* in Khyrim is debarred from the pleasure of partaking of pork. The flesh of the cow is *niang* to the *Khlaw* clan, although that of the male pig may be eaten.

273. The Khasis are in the habit of regularly drinking considerable quantities either of a spirit distilled from rice or millet (*ka'ind pudhe*), or of rice-beer, which is of two kinds (1) *ka'ind kiew*, (2) *ka'ind um*. Both of these are made from rice and, in some places, from millet, and the root of a plant called *u khawiang*. *Ka'ind kiew* is made by boiling the rice or millet. It is then taken out and spread over a mat, and, when it cools, fragments of the yeast (*u khawiang*) are sprinkled over it. After this it is placed in a basket, which is put in a wooden bowl. The

1:Gordon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

adoption of a female obviates the family dying out (*iap duh*), which to the Khasi is a very serious matter, inasmuch as there will then be no one qualified to place the bones of its members within the family tomb (*ka ka iap shieng wasduh*), and to perform the requisite funeral ceremonies. Amongst the Khasis no particular ceremonies are performed at the time of adoption; but some of the Syntengs observe a religious ceremony which consists largely of a feast to the clans-folk, at which liquor, rice, dried fish, and ginger are partaken of. Before the feast commences, each clansman is provided with a small gourd (*u khnap*) filled with liquor, a little of the latter is then thrown on the ground from the gourd, and the following words are uttered:—

"Oh, God! oh, Lord! oh, ruling King Binkeram, now the *pyrsop iing* ceremony is about to be performed, let the ceremony be propitious, and let males and females (*of* the clan) increase in numbers, so that the clan may become great, and respected, and that intelligent male members may spring up." No such ceremony is, however, observed, it is understood, in the Nartiang and Balang divisions.

In the case of a family being *iap duh* (extinct), the family property, according to Khasi custom, passes to the Sirm. Therefore it is to the interest of the members of families to adopt a female, when such necessity arises. As there is no religious ceremony which is compulsory to the Khasis on the occasion of an adoption, perhaps we are almost justified in concluding that in former times the adoption custom did not exist, more especially as the Khasis possess a special word, *iap duh*, for describing a family the females of which have all died out; and it is [illegible] property of such a family. The Syntengs custom of *'rep iing* may have been borrowed from the Hindus, when the Rajas of Jaintia became converts to that religion.

TENURE OF LAND AND LAWS REGARDING LAND.

Land in the Khasi Hills proper, i.e. land in the high plateau, is held somewhat differently from land in the Jaintia Hills and

I: Gordon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

should be severed with one blow. As soon as the head was cut off there was a rush on the part of the sacrificers to see in which direction the head faced. If the head faced towards the north or west, it was considered an evil omen; if it faced towards the south or east, a good omen. The cast in a lucky quarter amongst the Anamese also. The people ended up the proceedings by giving a long-drawn-out, deep-toned chant, or *kyrkot*. Immediately after the ceremony was concluded hundreds of boats shot out from the numerous creeks, where they had been lying, and fished the river all night, the result being an immense haul, to the delight of the Lyngams, who were seen next morning roasting the fish whole on bamboo stakes, after which they consumed them, the entrails being eaten with great gusto. Such is the worship of the goddess of the Funatit.

Similar pujas take place among the people of Wár-ding (the valley of fire) before they fish in the Khai-mara river and elsewhere in the Khasi Hills. In the Jaintia Hills there is the *syntang*-worship of the Kopili river, which used to be accompanied by human sacrifices, as has been mentioned above, pp. 102-104. The Myntang river, a tributary of the Kopili, must also be annually appeased by the sacrifice of a he-goat. Numerous hills also are worshipped, or rather the spirits which are said to inhabit them. One of the best known hill godlings is the deity who is thought to inhabit the little wood close to the summit of the Shillong Peak. This deity is said to have been discovered by a man named "U Shillong," who gave his name to the Shillong Peak, and indirectly to our beautiful hill station. The Siems of Mylliem and Nongkrem reverence *U'lei Shillong*, and there are certain clans who perform periodical sacrifices to this god. Probably the origin of the superstitious reverence with which U'lei Shillong is held by the Siems of Nongkrem and Mylliem is that their [illegible] of which an account will be found in the folk-lore section, took her origin from a rock not far from the Shillong Peak in the Nongkrem direction.

Rubbong Hill, which is within full view of the Shillong Peak to an easterly direction, is also said to be the abode of a minor god who is periodically propitiated by the members of the Mawthoh clan of the Khyrim State with a he-goat and a cock.

I: Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

be a successful era in store for the people of the State. The goddess on this occasion may be regarded as a Khasi Demeter, although no myst eries form part of her services as at the Grecian Eleusis. The Nongkrem ceremony and dance (now held at Smit) take place in the late spring, generally in the month of May. A lucky day having been fixed, the Siem sends a ring of cane (*lyrwah*) by way of a summons to the people of every village in the State, at the same time informing them of the date of the puja, and requesting them to attend with their offerings, consisting of goats and different articles of food. In the meantime various pujas have been taking place in the house of *Ka Siem Sad*, the Siem priestess, which it would be tedious to describe in detail. The more interesting points only will be mentioned. A fortnight before the puja and dance at Smit the *sak-blei*, or high priest, pours out libations of liquor in the *kyrem-blong*, or place where the sacrificial goats are kept, and in front of the great post (*ri diang ewing*, or Khasi oak), in the house of the Siem priestess. Dancing then takes place in front of the post. Later on the Siem, with the high priest and other attendant priests, walks with extremely slow gait to a small hill where a stone altar has been prepared, and sacrifices a cock in honour of *u'lei Shillong*, or the god of the Shillong Peak. A silver dish with powdered rice, liquor in a gourd (*ka'iad sor*), betel-nut, and some leaves of the Khasi oak (*diang ewing*), are also necessary adjuncts of the puja. A goat is then sacrificed, and the sacrifice is followed by a dance of twenty-two men armed with swords and shields and [illegible] return to the house of the Siem priestess and execute another dance in the small courtyard. The Siem and certain selected persons dance in front of the *wakot blei*, or holy post of Khasi oak inside the house of the Siem priestess, the dancers being entertained with dried fish and ginger. Then follows the great dance of girls and men in front of her house. The girls dance in the centre, taking such tiny steps, that the lifting of their feet from the ground is hardly perceptible, the arms held down to the sides and the eyes demurely downcast. It is on this occasion that they wear the peculiar silver (and sometimes gold) crowns illustrated in the

I: Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

be placed in the family tomb. There are special taboos for certain clans, of which the following are some examples. The clan Nongtathiang cannot eat the lemon, the Khar-ummuid clan must abstain from pork, the Cherra Siem family cannot eat dried fish, and the Siem family of Mylliem taboo the pumpkin. Possibly these taboos may be relics of totemism amongst these communities. The following are some of the other taboos, although some of them are but lightly regarded now-a-days.

(i.) To build a house with stone walls on all four sides.

(ii.) To use nails in building a house.

(iii.) To use more than one kind of timber in building the hearth.

(iv.) To build a house with resinous timber. Only the Siem family can use such timber.

(v.) To cut trees from a sacred forest.

(vi.) To take or give anything with the left hand.

(vii.) To step over any one's body.

(viii.) To kill any animal or bird without first throwing rice over its body.

(ix.) To drink the milk of a cow or goat.

(x.) To talk with any one, except with one of a man's or woman's fellow-workers, when the threshing of paddy is going on.

There are the following special taboos for pregnant women.

(a) To accompany a funeral procession.

(b) To finish any sewing she may have commenced before she became enceinte. There is a similar prohibition regarding the finishing of the plaiting of wicker baskets.

(c) It is easy for the husband of a pregnant woman to thatch the ridge of the house so much a time, or to fit a handle to an axe or a dao.

I: Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

quilt, made out of the bark of a tree, which is beaten out and then carefully woven, several layers of flattened bark being used before the right thickness is attained. This quilt is called by the Lyngams "*Ka sylla*" (Garo *simpak*). Food is cooked in earthen pots, but no plates are used, the broad leaves of the *mariang* tree taking their place. The leaves are then thrown away after use, a fresh supply being required for each meal.

The Lyngams brew rice beer, they do not distil spirit; the beer is brewed according to the Khasi method. Games they have none, and there are no jovial archery meetings like those of the Khasis. The Lyngams methods of hunting are setting spring guns and digging pitfalls for game. The people say that now the Government and the Sirdar of Nongstoin have prohibited both of these methods of destroying game, they no longer employ them. But I came across a pitfall for deer not long ago in the neighbourhood of a village in the Lyngam country. The people declared it to be a very old one: but this I very much doubt, and I fear that these objectionable methods of hunting are still used. The Lyngams fish to a small extent with nets, but their idea of fishing, *par excellence*, is poisoning the streams, an account of which has already been given in this monograph. The Lyngams are omnivorous feeders, they may be said to eat everything except dogs, snakes, the *hulock* monkey, and lizards. They like rice, when they can get it; for sometimes the out-turn of their fields does not last them more than a few months. They then have to fall back on *Job's tears* and millet. They eat arums largely, and for vegetables they cook wild plantains and the young shoots of bamboos and cane plants. The Lyngams are divided up into [illegible] are exogamous families. The Lyngams have some stories regarding the founders of these clans, of which the following is a specimen:—"A woman was asleep under a *soldier* tree in the jungle, a flower from which fell on her, and she conceived and bore a female child who was the ancestress of the Nongsohbar clan." Some of the stories of the origins of other clans do not bear repeating. There do not appear to be any hypergamous groups. As with the Khasis, it is a deadly sin to

won the money in the archery contest and now we should have a big feast. It is full moon now and much more beautiful during the night than the day. Oh, we are just having a good time." At once he swung his bunches of leaves and hopped away. The women take care of stirring the cooking pots. They are not choosy about the spoon. A bamboo, which a tired dancer might have just thrown away, is quite adequate for this purpose. When everything is ready, the people sit down in groups and eat the meat. Rice brandy is handed around. When the archers and other guests at the festival are more than sated and exhausted from all the dancing, they leave the place towards morning. 527

It should be pointed out that contrary to their usual customs the Khasi eat no rice at the great feast after the archery competition but only meat, with which brandy is drunk. There is a good deal of overindulgence in food and drink on this occasion. (32) [262]

32. P.F. Stegmiller, "Das Fest nach dem Pfeilschiessen" /The Feast after the Archery Contest/, Salvatoranische Mitteilungen /Salvatorian Communications/, 1910, No. 5.

4. Hunting Customs

Although there are all sorts of wild animals in the Khasi hills and Jaintia hills that can be hunted -- flying foxes which visit the orange gardens during the night, jackals, which annoy the villages with their howling, antelopes, does, deer and wild pigs which damage the rice fields, wild dogs, wolves, 224

8: Gurdon G-3 (no date) 1904 AR7 Khasi AR7

291 small kilt), and a cap which is peaked in front and which comes dow
well over the ears, called (*ka tupia sklur*) ear cap. The dress of t
Khasi females is somewhat different from that of the Synteng, the fo
mer wears a striped cloth tied round the waist, hanging down to th
knees, and another cloth, with a fringed border, knotted on both th
shoulders to cover the bust and a narrow cloth, called *ka jymphen*,
serve the purpose of under-clothing. A cloth knotted in front is al
worn like a cloak over shoulders. The Synteng woman wears a clot
smoothed round the body fastened above the bust and drooping dow
to the ankles. Another cloth is thrown over the shoulders, and cross
in front. Both Khasi and Synteng women wear a cloth tied over th
head, called *ka tap mukhlieh*. Up-to-date Khasi males wear knicke
292 bockers, stockings, and boots, and females chemises. On festive occ
sions, both Khasis and Syntengs, males and females, wear expensive silk
with earrings of gold or silver. There is a special dancing-dress
301 elaborate pattern. The women at festivals wear a circlet of silver wi
a spear-head ornament behind, rising 4 or 5 inches from the back
the head. Large coral beads are much valued, and necklaces of alte
nate beads of coral and gold, and sometimes of coral alone, are worn b
the chiefs and their principal followers. Such necklaces are worn b
● 242 women also on *pala* occasions. The staple diet of both Khasis a
Syntengs is rice and dried fish. They are, however, fond of all kin
of meat, especially pork. Some of the Syntengs abstain from be
[77] owing no doubt to Hindu influences. Neither Khasis nor Syntengs e
dog, which is partaken of with zest by the Nagas and the Garo tribes,
this is owing to the dog being considered by the Khasis to be the frie
of man. Neither Khasis nor Syntengs use milk, the latter bei
thought by them to be an excrement. Neither Khasis nor Synten
411 tattoo. The weapons of both Khasis and Syntengs are bows and arrow
swords and shields. The national game of the Khasis is archery, regar
ing which a detailed description will be found in paragraph 10.

The people live in regular villages on flat sites which have
64 [illegible] generally,—some holy spot of old remembrance to them
sites, where, as a rule, the family tombs are standing. The houses ar
342 built in the shape of a shell, the houses being divided into three compart
ments,—the *Shyngkap*, or porch, where odds and ends, and sometimes
fowls, are kept; *nongpei*, or centre room, which is used for cooking an
sitting in; and *rumpei*, or inner room, where the people sleep. Th
houses are low, with grass roofs reaching nearly to the ground, th
beams are of hewn timber, the walls are of either planks roughly hew
or [illegible] reeds or split bamboos plastered with clay. The Khasis' house
generally have boarded floors raised some feet from the ground leve

16McCormack E-4,5 (1956-1958) 1964
[PICBA] AR7 Khasi AR7

outward chemical fertilizers. Both level land and hillers are cultivated by the same hand techniques. 3 × 4-foot patches are fashioned with walkways between; soils are overturned within the patches and allowed to dry, the soils are burned slowly and the ash spread over the soil, and finally the seed is sown either broadcast or mark with the aid of the typal Khasi hoe. The coldest part of the upland enjoy a two-crop year, and Khasis often double crops well. Paddy has long been found in the lowlands, in parts of Jaintia and Khasi, the only place where the plow is found. Nowadays paddy is increased more area in the uplands, together with a wide terracing and irrigation technology. Many upland Khasis have house gardens in which they raise wide variety of vegetables, including pumpkin, cabbage, radishes, sweet potatoes, eggplant, and some others. Important crops in Khasi country are ahi rice, hot, cucumbers, cotton, bananas and pineapples, as Mar, they are betel nut, pan leaf, cocoa, and sugar cane. Fishing and hunting. Fishing done by poisoning streams, but this is a subsistence activity only in the southern foothills. Hunting is formerly by bow and arrow or by traps, including spring guns and pitfalls, but was always primarily a sport. [Cf. Stapleton 1908.] Gathering. Khasi once gathered about 180 species of wild plantstuff of them for food, but some for medicine. Their villagers still gather food plants, but there is no r dependence on gathering. Medicinal plants seems to be very important. Domestic animals. Fowl, pigs, and cattle are bred both for meat and tribes. Milk was formerly not utilized, but is now popular that specialists keep herds of milch cowings are used as village scavengers, but some also raise prepared food. Cattle and goats forage freely the fields during the winter, but are herded by communally hired herdsboy during the agricultu season. Most households keep chickens, primarilies their eggs, and a few keep ducks. A few horseyes also seen. Dogs are portable, except for hunti dogs. Cats are popular. Food and stimulants. The ple food of Khasis a boiled rice, together with the dri fish which is imported from Indian. Boiled beef, ch, and chicken are relished, but beyond the ceremol guest. Meals are taken twice a day, in the morning and evening, although farmers also take a midday meal in the field, and others may take tea and cold sweet potatoes or rice bread. Certain foods are taboo to certain clan. Stimulants are extremely common, especially betel nut, which is often accompanied by a bit of tobacco. Tobacco is also smoked as cigarettes and in hookah and other pipes. Every village has one or more household taverns, where distilled rice whisky is smoked and sold by the glass and by the bottle. Imported spirits had spread widely in the malarious Khasi country, but controls instituted in the 1960s have been fairly successful. All stimulants were once taken by men, women, and

241
243
199
178
244
241
179
226
224
222
[278]
231
[234]
[235]
[245]
262 •
264
262
189
276
273
276
276
177

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

428 to the sisters of his wife, or to her nearest relatives if there are no sisters. The rank and titles of a deceased male descend to his brother; when no brother exists, then to the male children of his mother's sisters (maternal aunts); should the maternal aunts have no male children living at the time, then to the eldest male child of his sisters. When no relatives are to be found, the property of the deceased goes to the ruler of the country; or if a man dies leaving no relative other than wife and children, *i.e.* no relatives on the mother's side, the property in this case also goes to the ruler, who, as the wife and children cannot preserve the ashes of the deceased, takes charge of them, and for so doing takes all the property also. With regard to the inhabitants of the Lower Hills at Sheilá, the custom as to succession is as follows:—Property belonging to a subject of Sheilá is divided into two classes—(1) Property inherited from ancestors, which descends to the nearest of kin or to the relative of a deceased person who can perform his obsequies. (2) Property acquired during the lifetime of the holder, which is inherited by the children, whose duty it is to provide for the maintenance of their mother until she re-marries or dies."

434 468 MATERIAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.—The Khásis and the Syntengs are as a people prosperous. Common labourers, if adult males, can earn wages as high as one shilling per diem, and adult females as high as eightpence. The dwellings of the well-to-do classes are generally constructed of masonry, with thatched roof and 342 plank floor, and divided into two or three rooms. The furniture 152 consists of a bedstead (*shorpáh*), a mat or two (*sumé*), some cooking utensils, and a few boxes. The ordinary peasants and poorer 342 classes construct their huts of straw, mud, or plank walls, with a 184 thatch or cane roof. These are fitted with wooden platforms or loose planks placed on the ground to serve as beds. The food 262 of the well-to-do classes consists of rice, fish when obtainable, fowl 434 or meat, curry, vegetables, oil, hog's lard, fermented and spirituous liquor. It may be estimated that the living expenses of an average-sized household of this class would be about Rs. 25 or £2, 10s. a month, valuing the articles of consumption at *bázár* prices. An ordinary husbandman or labourer lives on rice, dry fish, occasionally a 276 little meat, oil, or hog's lard. *Pán* leaf, betel-nut, and lime are essential to the comfort of all the hill people, who are inveterate chewers of *pán*. They commence at an early age, and are rarely seen without a *pán* leaf in their mouths; the females are quite

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

361 In the interior of the Hills the largest villages are mere clusters of
463 huts. The great majority of the inhabitants are employed in agriculture, but there are no data upon which a proportion of agriculturists to non-agriculturists could be based.

167 There is no immigration into the District. Both the Khásis and
198 the Syntengs have been successful in preserving to the present day their primitive isolation, free from the interference of Hinduism. They still maintain their aboriginal forms of belief and religious worship, and repudiate alike the authority of Brâhmans and
(771) (262) the entire system of caste. To some extent, however, they have given way to Hindu prejudices in the matter of purity of food. The few Hindus to be found in the Hills are temporary residents, engaged in civil and military employ, who always contemplate returning
(563) (441) to their own homes. The traders are for the most part natives of the Hills; for the Márwári merchants, who penetrate into every other corner of Assam, have been able to obtain no footing in the face of Khási competition. There is likewise no emigration from the District. The hillmen are a well-to-do and contented race, and either produce themselves or obtain by trade sufficient to satisfy
(166) their scanty wants. A certain number of both Khásis and Syntengs proceed southwards every year to work on the tea gardens of Cáchár and Sylhet, but such absence from home is only temporary.

243 AGRICULTURE: RICE.—Thirteen different varieties of rice are cultivated in the District, of which the following is a list, giving the Khási name as well as the description of the grain:—(1) *U-kyhe-khyrsiew* (*u*, the masculine article, meaning 'the,' and *kyhe*, mean masculine, meaning 'paddy'), brown rice with long grain; (2) *u-kyhe-khyrsiew-lasi-lik*, a white rice with long grain; (3) *u-kyhe-lasot*, round-grained rice; (4) *u-kyhe-kusi*, bearded, husked; (5) *u-kyhe-dew-ha-sang*, black husked rice (literally *u* = 'the,' *kyhe* = 'paddy,' *dew* = 'earth,' *ha* = 'that,' *sang* = 'black'); (6) *u-kyhe-ka-lik*, white rice; (7) *u-kyhe-sein*, scented rice (literally *u* = 'the,' *kyhe* = 'paddy,' *sniew* = 'royal'); (8) *u-kyhe-la-kruk*, large-grained rice; (9) *u-kyhe-ka-slang*, small-grained rice; (10) *u-kyhe-sa-kia*, early rice; (11) *u-kyhe-ra-kem*, late rice; (12) *u-kyhe-kang-ka*, rice grown along with beans; (13) *u-kyhe-ka-lik*, small rice.

Rice is cultivated in marshy fields situated near running water as well as in high lands. The first seven of the above thirteen species of rice are sown in marshy lands during the months of April and May.

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

243 the District, nor do any superior kinds of cereals appear to have been substituted for inferior ones.

THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF RICE CULTIVATION, in English and Khási, are as follow:—The blade as it first shows, *iŋch-u-kyba*; the blade when well above the ground, *la-thyllang-u-kyba*; the ears when first formed, *law-mat*; the ears beginning to ripen, *kyr-kew*; the ripe ears, *la-kiá*; unhusked rice, *u-kyba*; husked rice, *u-khaw*; cooked rice, *ka-ja*.

262 [435] [782] THE VARIOUS SOLID AND LIQUID PREPARATIONS made from rice are the following:—(1) *U-kypu*, cakes of different kinds, sold at six or twelve for a penny, according to size. (2) *U-khiri* or *gih-khir*, prepared by the hillmen as an offering to their deity at the conclusion of the harvest. (3) *Kadaw*, fermented rice water, sold at the rate of from three-farthings to threepence per quart, according to the strength of the liquor. (4) *Ka kiad phatika* or *ka kiad-kirat*, a kind of spirits distilled from rice, and sold at from threepence to four-pence-halfpenny per quart.

273 435 243 OTHER CEREALS.—Indian corn, or *u-rie-ka-dew*, is grown on homesteaded lands. The ground is first manured, and the seed is sown about the middle of April. The crop is fit for cutting in September and October. A kind of millet seed called *u-krái* is commonly sown with paddy on high lands. For want of more suitable land, however, this crop is often cultivated by itself on rocky slopes; and when this course is adopted, the jungle is first cut down in February and burnt. The seed is sown in April, and the crop gathered in December.

244 235 PULSES AND FIBRES.—Only two kinds of pulses are grown in the Hills, *u-rym-kai-ktung* and *u-rym-kai-jil*, both of which are varieties of beans. They are sown on high lands in March and April, and gathered in December. The only fibre is that made from the pine-apple stalk, which is largely used for making netted bags.

245 [439] MISCELLANEOUS CROPS.—(1) Oranges.—There are numerous orange plantations in the neighbourhood of Cherra Púnjí, and the fruit is exported to all parts of Bengal. In the year 1876-77 the estimated exports were 9,400,000 in number, valued at Rs. 37,600, or £3760, at the rate of Rs. 12 or £1, 4s. per three thousand. These figures show a decrease in number as compared with the estimated export twenty years ago. The trees flower in March or April, and the fruit ripens in October and the following months. In some cases the oranges are allowed to remain on the trees till March, but

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

231 (£174, 8s.) was expended on the purchase of stock, including
648 cattle, sheep, and pigs from England. Even native cattle at the
654 elevation of Shillong fall off very much in the months of January and February from want of forage, and the Khásiás at this season generally drive them to lower slopes. But one of the chief objects in keeping cattle at the farm was to obtain manure; and *moti kaldi* (Phaseolus radiatus) was grown for them, cut green, and stocked
[731] for food. On this they did very well. In 1875-76, however, cattle disease broke out on the farm in a very virulent shape. Out of 39 cattle attacked, only 7, or 18 per cent., recovered, and the animals imported from England all died. There was also a heavy mortality in that year among the sheep and pigs. The following are the financial results for the two years:—1874-75—Expenditure, Rs. 13,297. 0. 5; receipts, Rs. 309. 2. 6: deficit, Rs. 12,987. 13. 11. 1875-76—Expenditure, Rs. 11,445. 8. 6; receipts, Rs. 1036. 15. 0: deficit, Rs. 10,408. 9. 6. Total deficit, Rs. 23,396. 7. 5, or £2339.
648 13s. In view of these figures the Chief Commissioner has deter-
654 mined to restrict farming operations to small experiments in irrigated *moti* crops, and, as a measure of economy, to dispense with the services of the superintendent. The future expenditure on the farm will be insignificant. The establishment now (1877) consists of a *sardár* on Rs. 30 and a *chaukidár* on Rs. 10 a month (total, £72 a year), under the direct control of the Deputy-Conservator of Forests; the total number of live-stock is 64 head.

731 Natural Calamities, such as blights, floods, or droughts, are not common in the District, although the crops in the Jáintiá Hills sometimes suffer from insects. So far as the Deputy-Commissioner is able to ascertain, no destruction of crops affecting the general harvest has occurred within the experience of the present generation.
[435] During the Orissa famine of 1866-67 the maximum price of common rice reached £1 per hundredweight, but no such distress was felt as to require Government relief operations. The price just mentioned was certainly equal to the rates prevalent in the famine-stricken localities; but prices always rule high in the Hills, and afford no just criterion of the state of affairs among the general body of the inhabitants. Distress was only felt by a small portion of the population, chiefly the Bengáli immigrants residing in the District,
262 who are generally a well-to-do class. The Hill people, as a rule, do
244 not eat potatoes, which they grow only for export; but in case of
439 actual famine, they might fall back upon this crop for their own food supply.